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Security Council

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Resolution 2143 (2014)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 7129th meeting, on 7 March 2014

The Security Council,

Reaffirming its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, 1379 (2001) of 20 November 2001, 1460 (2003) of 30 January 2003, 1539 (2004) of 22 April 2004, 1612 (2005) of 26 July 2005, 1882 (2009) of 4 August 2009, 1998 (2011) of 12 July 2011 and 2068 (2012) of 19 September 2012, and the Statements of its President on 24 July 2006 (S/PRST/2006/33), 28 November 2006 (S/PRST/2006/48), 12 February 2008 (S/PRST/2008/6), 17 July 2008 (S/PRST/2008/28), 29 April 2009 (S/PRST/2009/9), 16 June 2010 (S/PRST/2010/10) and 17 June 2013 (S/PRST/2013/8), which contribute to a comprehensive framework for addressing the protection of children affected by armed conflict,

Acknowledging that its resolutions 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009), 1998 (2011) and 2068 (2012) and the Statements of its President on children and armed conflict have generated progress in preventing and responding to violations and abuses committed against children, in particular in the demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration of thousands of children, the signing of action plans between parties to armed conflict and the United Nations and the delisting of parties to conflict from the Annexes to the Secretary-General's annual report,

Remaining however deeply concerned over the lack of progress on the ground in some situations of concern, where parties to conflict continue to violate with impunity the relevant provisions of applicable international law relating to the rights and protection of children in armed conflict,

Recalling that all parties to armed conflict must comply strictly with the obligations applicable to them under international law for the protection of children in armed conflict, including those contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol on the involvement of Children in armed conflict, as well as the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977,

Noting that Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes the right of the child to education and sets forth obligations for State parties to the Convention, with a view to progressively achieving this right on the basis of equal opportunity,

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Expressing deep concern about the military use of schools by armed forces and non-State armed groups in contravention of applicable international law, including those involving their use as military barracks, weapons storage facilities, command centres, detention and interrogation sites and firing and observation positions,

Expressing further concern regarding the high number of children that are being killed and maimed in conflict and post-conflict situations by landmines, explosive remnants of war, improvised explosive devices and other unexploded ordnance,

Convinced that the protection of children in armed conflict should be an important aspect of any comprehensive strategy to resolve conflict and build peace,

Recalling the responsibility of all Member States to comply with their respective obligations to end impunity and to investigate and prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other egregious crimes perpetrated against children; and *noting* that the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern committed against children has been strengthened through the work on and prosecution of these crimes by the International Criminal Court, ad hoc and mixed tribunals and specialized chambers in national tribunals,

Acknowledging the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty and noting that in line with the provisions in Article 7(4) of the Treaty exporting States Parties shall take into account the risk of covered conventional arms or items being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of violence against children,

Reiterating its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and, in this connection, its commitment to address the widespread impact of armed conflict on children,

Stressing the primary role of Governments in providing protection and relief to all children affected by armed conflict, *recognizing* the importance of strengthening national capacities in this regard and *reiterating* that all action undertaken by United Nations entities within the framework of the monitoring and reporting mechanism must be designed to support and supplement, as appropriate, the protection and rehabilitation roles of national Governments,

Recognizing further that capacity-building for the protection of children affected by armed conflict is a process that must begin from the earliest days of international engagement,

Emphasizing the vital role of the United Nations, in consultations with international partners, to support national authorities in consolidating peace and in developing strategies for peacebuilding priorities as well as to ensure that these strategies strengthen coherence between political, security, human rights, development and rule of law activities,

Recognizing the crucial role of child protection advisers in mainstreaming child protection and leading monitoring, prevention and reporting efforts in relevant United Nations peacekeeping missions, political missions and peacebuilding offices in accordance with their mandate, including advice for and close cooperation and coordination between the missions, UNICEF and specialized NGOs for child demobilization and integration and prevention of recruitment,

Underlining the importance of providing military, police and civilian peacekeepers with adequate predeployment and in-mission training on mission-specific child protection issues and on appropriate comprehensive prevention and protection responses,

Recognizing the valuable contribution of relevant regional and subregional organizations and arrangements for the protection of children affected by armed conflict and commending in this regard the declaration signed on 17 September 2013 between the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Peace and Security Department of the African Union Commission, in order to mainstream protection mechanisms in all peace and security activities of the African Union, in close partnership with UNICEF, as well as the EU Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict, including its Checklist for the integration of the protection of children affected by armed conflict into EU Common Security and Defense Policy operations and the development by NATO, in close collaboration with the DPKO and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, of training courses and military guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict,

1. *Strongly condemns* all violations of applicable international law involving the recruitment and use of children by parties to armed conflict, as well as their re-recruitment, killing and maiming, rape and other sexual violence, abductions, attacks against schools or hospitals and denial of humanitarian access by parties to armed conflict and all other violations of international law, including international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law, committed against children in situations of armed conflict and *demands* that all relevant parties immediately put an end to such practices and take special measures to protect children;

2. *Calls on* Member States to devise ways, in close consultations with the United Nations country-level task force on monitoring and reporting and United Nations country teams, to facilitate the development and implementation of time-bound action plans, and the review and monitoring by the United Nations country-level task force of obligations and commitments relating to the protection of children affected by armed conflict;

3. *Reiterates* the value of interministerial committees as a successful framework for partnership with concerned Governments to discuss and follow-up on child protection commitments and *encourages* these Governments with the support of the United Nations to utilize these committees to foster action plan implementation;

4. *Stresses* the importance of regular and timely consideration of violations and abuses committed against children in armed conflict, including through incorporating, where appropriate, a children and armed conflict dimension in the terms of reference of Security Council field visits, and *invites* its Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict to make full use of its toolkit (S/2006/724) in light of ongoing discussions on enhancing compliance, and in this regard to continue considering the issue of persistent perpetrators and action plan implementation;

5. *Recalls* the fact that the conscription or enlistment of children under the age of 15 or using them to participate actively in hostilities in both international and non-international armed conflict constitutes a war crime under the Rome Statute of

the International Criminal Court, and *notes* that the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict requires State parties to set a minimum age of 18 for compulsory recruitment and participation in hostilities and to raise the minimum age for voluntary recruitment from that set out in article 38, paragraph 3, of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in hostilities;

6. *Welcomes in this context* the campaign "Children, Not Soldiers" initiated by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and UNICEF, in collaboration with other United Nations partners, with a view to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children by Government armed forces in conflict by 2016;

7. *Urges* in this regard concerned Governments to undertake all efforts in order to ensure that no children are in their ranks in conflict, in particular through the development and implementation of time-bound action plans; *calls* on Member States, all relevant United Nations entities, NGOs and the donor community to support in their various capacities the campaign "Children, Not Soldiers", recognizing that its goal can only be attained through partnership and active involvement of all;

8. *Invites* the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict to inform the Security Council about the campaign "Children, Not Soldiers", including about process and progress in delisting concerned parties;

9. *Further urges* Member States, United Nations entities and other parties concerned to ensure that child protection provisions, including those relating to the release and reintegration of children formerly associated with armed forces or armed groups, are integrated into all peace negotiations and peace agreements;

10. *Reiterates* the Security Council's readiness to adopt targeted and graduated measures against persistent perpetrators of violations and abuses committed against children, taking into account the relevant provisions of its resolutions 1539 (2004), 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009), 1998 (2011) and 2068 (2012) and to consider including provisions pertaining to parties to armed conflict that engage in activities in violation of applicable international law relating to the rights and protection of children in armed conflicts, when establishing, modifying or renewing the mandate of relevant sanctions regimes;

11. *Stresses* the need to exclude genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other egregious crimes perpetrated against children from amnesty laws and other similar provisions and *strongly encourages* concerned States to establish a vetting mechanism to ensure that those responsible for such crimes are not included in the ranks of the army or other security forces;

12. *Emphasizes* the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to investigate and prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other egregious crimes perpetrated against children and *highlights* in this regard the contribution of the International Criminal Court, in accordance with the principle of complementarity to national criminal jurisdictions as set out in the Rome Statute;

13. *Urges* concerned Member States, when undertaking security sector reforms, to mainstream child protection, such as the establishment of child protection units in national security forces and of effective age assessment mechanisms to prevent underage recruitment *while stressing* in this regard the importance of ensuring universal birth registration, including late birth registration;

14. *Urges further* all parties concerned, including Member States, United Nations entities, as well as financial institutions to support, as appropriate, bearing in mind national ownership, the development and strengthening of the capacities of national institutions and local civil society networks for advocacy, protection and rehabilitation of children affected by armed conflict as well as national accountability mechanisms, including building investigative and prosecutorial capacities and the adoption of legislation criminalizing violations and abuses committed against children affected by armed conflict;

15. *Reiterates its request* to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to pursue efforts to coalesce the donor community in order to address funding gaps, and encourages bilateral, regional and international partners to provide financial and capacity-building support in this regard, including for education during the conflict and post-conflict periods;

16. *Recalls* the importance of ensuring that children continue to have access to basic services during the conflict and post-conflict periods, including, inter alia, education and health care;

17. *Reiterates its deep concern* about attacks as well as threats of attacks in contravention of applicable international law against schools and/or hospitals, and protected persons in relation to them as well as the closure of schools and hospitals in situations of armed conflict as a result of attacks and threats of attacks and *urges* all parties to armed conflict to refrain from actions that impede children's access to education and to health services;

18. *Expresses deep concern* at the military use of schools in contravention of applicable international law, recognizing that such use may render schools legitimate targets of attack, thus endangering children's and teachers' safety as well as children's education and in this regard:

(a) *Urges* all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian character of schools in accordance with international humanitarian law;

(b) *Encourages* Member States to consider concrete measures to deter the use of schools by armed forces and armed non-State groups in contravention of applicable international law;

(c) *Urges* Member States to ensure that attacks on schools in contravention of international humanitarian law are investigated and those responsible duly prosecuted;

(d) *Calls upon* United Nations country-level task forces to enhance the monitoring and reporting on the military use of schools;

19. *Recalls* the obligations of all parties to an armed conflict, in accordance with international humanitarian law, to ensure that the wounded and sick, including children, receive, to the fullest extent practicable and with the least possible delay, the medical care and attention required by their condition, and to respect and protect

medical and health personnel, facilities, transports and activities in accordance with international humanitarian law;

20. *Recommends* that Member States include child protection in military training and standard operating procedures, as well as in military guidance as appropriate; *recommends further* that United Nations entities and United Nations peacekeeping troop and police-contributing countries undertake targeted and operational trainings for the preparation of United Nations mission personnel including troop and police contingents on their contribution in preventing violations against children so as to give all mission personnel the ability to effectively recognize, report and respond to violations and abuses committed against children and to successfully support child protection activities for better implementation of their respective mandates;

21. *Urges* all United Nations entities, including peacekeeping missions, political missions, peacebuilding offices, United Nations offices, agencies, funds and programmes to give full attention to violations against children in the application of the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces;

22. *Urges also* Member States, United Nations entities, including the Peacebuilding Commission and other parties concerned to ensure that post-conflict recovery and reconstruction planning, programmes and strategies give due priority to issues concerning children affected by armed conflict;

23. *Urges* relevant United Nations entities to continue to take concrete steps to reduce the impact of mines, unexploded ordnance and cluster munition and explosive remnants of war on children by prioritizing mine clearance, risk education and risk reduction activities;

24. *Decides* to continue the inclusion of specific provisions for the protection of children in the mandates of all relevant United Nations peacekeeping operations and political missions, encourages deployment of child protection advisers to such missions, and calls upon the Secretary-General to ensure that the need for and the number and roles of such advisers are systematically assessed during the preparation and renewal of each United Nations peacekeeping operation and political mission and *encourages* DPKO and DPA to take into account child protection when briefing the Council on country-specific situations;

25. *Encourages* pertinent regional and subregional organizations and arrangements to help address the widespread impact of armed conflict on children, *invites* them to continue the mainstreaming of child protection into their advocacy, policies, programmes and mission planning, the development and expansion of guidelines to protect children affected by armed conflict as well as the training of personnel and the inclusion of child protection staff in their peacekeeping and field operations, and *reiterates* its call for the establishment of child protection mechanisms within their secretariats, including through the appointment of child protection focal points;

26. *Reiterates* its request to the Secretary-General to continue to ensure that in all his reports on country-specific situations the matter of children and armed conflict is included as a specific aspect of the report;

27. *Decides* to remain actively seized of this matter.